



MORNING PRAYER AND HOLY COMMUNION AT NINE
SERVICE LEAFLET

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 31, 2019

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

* PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 32 (*read responsively by verse*)

L: Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

P: Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

L: While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.

P: For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

L: Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said,

“I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

**P: Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress,
the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.**

L: You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.

P: I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

L: Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.

P: Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.

L: Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,

P: and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

THE FIRST READING Joshua 5:9–12

The LORD said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

THE SECOND READING

Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So he told them this parable: Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything.

But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

HOMILY

“Lesson Five: Let Love and Grace Guide Your Life”
(Fifth in the nine-part series: *Life Lessons from Luke*)

Rev. Ahrens

MISSION INVITATION

Cash and designated checks go to **Kaleidoscope Youth Center** that works with young people in Central Ohio to create safe and empowering environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth through advocacy, education, and support. Thank you for your generosity.

Nicole Moss

OFFERTORY HYMN 476

My Life Flows On In Endless Song

Endless Song

Want to give online? Please see the Depart to Serve insert for more information and a QR link.

WORSHIP LEADERS

The Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Ahrens, *celebrant and preacher*Tom Stewart, *pianist*Peter Murray, *liturgist*

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SUNDAY, APRIL 7

Liturgist: Kelly Dodd

Communion Preparation and Refreshments: Alan and Francine Files